



First 5 San Diego

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

2003-2006

The California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10) was passed by voters in November 1998. This statewide ballot initiative increased the tax on cigarettes and tobacco products. The revenue is being used to provide comprehensive, integrated systems to promote early childhood development from the prenatal period to age five. Health, child care and parent education programs are funded at the county level to best meet local needs as determined by each community. The intent is for all children to be healthy, to be cared for in strong and supportive environments, and to enter school ready to learn.

The First 5 Commission of San Diego oversees Prop 10 funds in San Diego County. Working closely with advisory committees and the community, the Commission adopts a Strategic Plan, selects priority results for improving the lives of children and families, and oversees the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including funding activities.

The Commission is advised by a 15-member Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC) of professionals representing many diverse segments of the local community, including parents, health care providers, child development specialists, researchers, community-based service providers, and educators. Their role is to inform the Commission about community needs, existing resources, research and best practices, and to advise the Commission concerning the Strategic Plan.

Leadership teams also support the work of the Commission with special community expertise concerning large and long-term initiatives. Currently there are four leadership teams, supporting civic engagement, literacy, school readiness and evaluation.

In 2002, the California Children and Families Commission adopted the name "First 5 California." The purpose for this change was to communicate that the State Commission is dedicated to improving the lives of California's children in their first five years of life. In October 2002, the San Diego Children and Families Commission adopted the new name "First 5 Commission of San Diego" to better reflect its focus.

In early 2000, the Commission produced its first "All 4 Kids" Strategic Plan, which addressed initial priorities and longer-term infrastructure development activities such as building partnerships and establishing evaluation, data and reporting systems. The first year of operations under this Strategic Plan included discussion, information gathering, priority setting, and funding activity. Lessons learned helped the Commission and the community clarify goals and methods for maximizing the opportunities offered by Proposition 10. The Commission's second Strategic Plan for 2001 to 2003 built on the accomplishments, infrastructure and wisdom developed under the first year's plan. As it worked to meet the goals of its second Strategic Plan, the Commission broadened its community engagement, improved funding processes, fostered collaboration among community agencies, developed an evaluation plan, and moved towards more focused, results-based planning.

This Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2003/4 to 2005/6 reflects the growth and progress achieved through three years of work, commitment, and shared experience aimed at improving the lives of children and families. The plan is the result of extensive dialogue among Commissioners, TPAC members, community members throughout the county, content experts, and public and private agencies.

VISION

Every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn.

MISSION

The First 5 Commission of San Diego provides proactive leadership to achieve this vision by:

- Funding services through grant-making to achieve priority results
- Advocating for policy change at local, state and national levels
- Acting as a catalyst and leader for coordinating and integrating existing resources
- Building community capacity and infrastructure to support families

VALUES

As it makes decisions and determines directions, the Commission holds to these values:

- We are committed to the success of all of our children.
- We support the role of parents as the child's first teachers.
- We embrace the diversity of San Diego's communities.
- Our communities possess our greatest assets and their participation is essential to our success.
- The Commission and the community are mutually accountable to our children.
- Readiness to learn includes physical, mental, social, emotional, and developmental well-being.

OPERATING GUIDELINES

The work of the Commission, in all of its roles, is shaped by the following guidelines, developed with the participation of the community:

- Open and inclusive processes
- Seamless, family-focused systems
- Responsiveness to the needs of all children
- Culturally competent approaches
- Prevention and early intervention
- Partnership and collaboration
- Proven programs and innovations
- Prioritization, allocation and leveraging of resources for maximum results
- Promotion of no-cost and low-cost solutions
- Community and inter-generational solutions
- Measurable and sustainable results

ONGOING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through ongoing community engagement efforts, the Commission maintains broad community relationships and seeks public guidance and input regarding assets, needs and priorities. For advice or assistance in resolving difficult issues such as priorities and directions, the Commission engages community partners such as parents, residents, educators, public safety groups, health and child care providers, associations, faith communities, grantees and advocacy groups.

PLANNING FOR RESULTS

The First 5 Commission of San Diego County has adopted a results-based approach to guide its activities. This approach bases planning and evaluation on the results the Commission wishes to achieve for children and families. Results-based planning defines:

- **Results:** What conditions do we want to improve for children and families?
- **Strategies:** What can we do that we think will work?
- **Indicators:** What can we measure to show us what we're doing is working?

The Commission envisions a single, over-arching result:

Every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn.

Ensuring that every child achieves school readiness requires that:

- Children are physically healthy
- Children are socially and emotionally healthy
- Children are cognitively developing appropriately
- Families, communities and systems support children's readiness

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING PRIORITY RESULTS

To choose its priority results, the Commission uses the following criteria, based on its values and operating guidelines as well as guidance from the community:

- The result is consistent with the focus and intent of Proposition 10 and the First 5 San Diego Strategic Plan
- The First 5 Commission can credibly make a difference.
- The result affects a considerable number of children and families.
- The result is easily understood.

CHOOSING STRATEGIES FOR PRIORITY RESULTS

The Commission will work closely with TPAC, the leadership teams and the community to determine the strategies or activities to achieve its priority results, using the Strategic Plan as a framework. For each result, the Commission will determine its most appropriate role as outlined in its Mission:

- Funding services,
- Advocating for policy change,
- Coordinating and leveraging existing resources
- Developing infrastructure and,
- Building community capacity.

HOW FUNDS WILL BE USED

First 5 Commission of San Diego funds will be allocated to:

- Commission initiatives, to support the local Commission's priority results, innovations, and State Commission or other initiatives
- Administrative funds, including funds for public information and education. Administrative funds will also support evaluation of funded activities, community-level results and Commission operations, as well as technical assistance to grantees. Administrative costs will be kept as low as possible commensurate with responsible management of a comprehensive, countywide program.

Any excess revenue or unallocated funds will be placed in a sustaining reserve to stabilize funds and extend support for priority results.

First Five Commission of San Diego
1495 Pacific Highway, Suite 202
San Diego, CA 92101-2417

Toll Free: (866) 726-8831
Fax: (619) 230-6466
www.first5sandiego.org